

Catholic Theatre Conference

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President - Walter Bamberger

Vice President - Raymond McCorney

Secretary-Treasurer - Patricia Bradley

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CONVENTION

Within four short months Catholic Theatre Conference members will have their opportunity to grow in grace and wisdom, theatre-wise, when they meet at Loretto Heights College for our 1952-53 Convention. Reports from Dr. Earl Bach, Convention Chairman, and Rev. Donald McMahon, Chairman of the Planning Committee, have certainly excited our interest here at your central office. We cannot give you a full report since plans are still under way, but perhaps we can give you some idea by quoting part of a letter from Father McMahon: "The emphasis in this convention will be placed upon full participation by the delegates rather than upon information given by a few experts, and the usual frantic note-taking. This will be primarily a work conference. Delegates will spend a majority of the time in small face-to-face working groups where full participation is possible. Catholic Theatre workers from high schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, children's theatres and community theatres will share their experiences, obtain assistance from specialists in solving their problems, learn new techniques through practical demonstrations and evaluate recent developments in the field." Remember, the dates are June 10-13. It is sure to be worth YOUR while.

LIBRARY ADDITION

A welcome addition to our library is a microfilm copy of the New York Theatre Library collection. Mr. Rice and Sister M. Ruth feel that this set will be useful to members in many instances, from research purposes to reading for pleasure. For further information on the contents of the collection, contact the library, Immaculate Heart College, Los Feliz & Western, Hollywood, Calif.

NEW CHAIRMAN FOR NEW ENGLAND

Mr. Frank Sidlauskas has been appointed to fill the long vacant post of Chairman of the New England Region. Director of Drama at Boston College, Mr. Sidlauskas is most eager to recruit new members for CTC in his region. His first project, designed to stimulate the interest of prospective members, is a series of Seminars in Theatre. The seminars will be given about once a month and will embrace most of the theatre crafts; theatre lighting, makeup, costuming, scenic design, stagecraft, directing, acting, arena theatre, and even business and publicity.

BOARD MEETING REPORT

On December 28th a meeting of the executive board and regional chairman was held in Cincinnati. We were hopeful that more members would have written us, mentioning those things which they would have liked discussed at the meeting. But despite the fact that we did not have many suggestions from members in general, many subjects were touched upon which we feel will be most beneficial to our members and to the function of The Conference as a whole.

One of the first items to come up in discussion was the regional situation. It was readily agreed that in several regions activity was not what it might be. Many reasons were suggested as well as many suggestions of remedies. One of the most obvious reasons for the situation was the awkward routing of the regions, geographically speaking, in many cases. After a closer look at the map, it could be seen that a more practical division of regions might be made. Hence, it was decided (Continued on Page 2)

CATHOLIC THEATRE CONFERENCE

BOARD MEETING REPORT

(Continued from Page 1)

to appoint a committee to study the regional planning and make such changes as they see fit. If you would like to voice an opinion in this regard, please contact your regional chairman.

In addition to the regions committee, six other committees were formed: College Theatre, High School Theatre, Children's Theatre, Community Theatre, Playlisting, Manuscripts, & Norms, and Musical Productions Committees. It will be the task of each committee to study the needs of its particular area of theatre, compile such materials as are most frequently sought by Conference members in that area, and be ready to offer advice and answer inquiries through the channels of your Service Bureau.

The tentative schedule of the 1953 convention was discussed. The suggestion was made that reprints should be made of the lectures given at the convention. These will be then filed with reference material at The Service Bureau for your future use.

The need for revising our constitution was recognized. Many of its provisions are now obsolete and many new practices present themselves and should be incorporated into the constitution. It was decided that this problem should be handled by the same committee appointed to redivide the regions.

The operation of our library and plans for its expansion were discussed. The possibility of receiving donations of new scripts from publishers was brought up. The matter is being investigated. The need for a list of library selections to be distributed periodically to members was also recognized. Our librarians have been working on this project and promise a complete and comprehensible list this month. Copies will be made and sent to members as soon as the list is completed.

CAN YOU HELP?

We have received a request for a director's copy of *EVERYMAN*. If you have a copy but do not care to donate it to the library, we would appreciate borrowing it for a short time.

CROSS COUNTRY CIRCUIT High School

Under the direction of Sister M. Ernestine, O.S.F., drama students at St. Francis High School, Little Falls, Minn., have had a fruitful theatre year thus far. Their first production was an operetta, *CHONITA*, the music for which is based on that of Franz Liszt. For Christmas they did *LA NOCHE BUENA*.

Two other Christmas programs escaped our notice in last month's Calendar. They were those of Cathedral Senior High School of Duluth, Minn., and The School of the Brown County Ursulines, St. Martin, Ohio. Students at Cathedral gave Brochet's *CHRISTMAS AT THE CROSSROADS* while *THE TALE OF THE NATIVITY* was given by the latter. Sister Mary John, former Conference Secretary and now a member of the Brown County Ursuline community, gave us a few details on the production. It seems that *THE TALE OF THE NATIVITY* is a dramatization of the Nativity story as retold by the Indian children of Inka-meep, British Columbia, and preserved by the Lieutenant Governor of the Province. The story is unique in that it was conceived as having taken place in the children's own lovely Kanagan Valley instead of the Land of Palestine.

On February 14th, 15th & 16th the curtain will rise on the Walter Kerr musical comedy, *SING OUT SWEET LAND*, to be presented by Aquinas High School, La Cross, Wis. Sister Margaret Mary, F.S.P.A. will direct the musical.

The Senior Class of Mother of Mercy High School, Cincinnati, will present *FAMILY TREE*, a three act comedy by Olive Price, this month. Sister M. Carlos, R.S.M., director of dramatics at Mother of Mercy, reports that the Masque and Gavel Dramatic Club will hold its second semester initiation ceremony Feb. 12th.

Colleges & Universities

From Brother James Luke we learn that students at St. Mary's College, Winona, Minn., gave *THE HASTY HEART* by John Patrick as their first selection this season. *SEVENTEEN* and *ELIZABETH THE QUEEN* are on their agenda for spring productions.

CATHOLIC THEATRE CONFERENCE

LENTEN SELECTIONS

If you are interested in more information on the plays listed below, please contact your Service Bureau. Work sheets on some of these plays are available and will gladly be sent to you upon request.

***BARTER**, Father Nagle - Longmans, Green, 5 M 6 W - 3 sets, 4 acts.

***BETRAYAL**, The, Dowsett - French, 20 M 3 W - 3 sets, 3 acts.

***DARK HOURS**, The, Marquis - Doubleday, Doran, 8 M 2 W - 4 sets, 5 scenes.

***FANTASY OF THE PASSION**, Lord - Queen's Work, 12 M 5 W - 1 set, 1 act, 2½ hours.

***LORD OF DEATH**, de la Fuye Parker - Longmans Green, 9 M 8 W - 2 sets, 3 acts.

***MAN'S HOUSE**, A, Drinkwater - French, 12 M 2 W - 1 set, 3 acts.

***PILATE THE GOVERNOR**, Lord - Queen's Work, 20 M 3 W - 5 sets, 4 acts.

SHEKELS, Walsh - Magnificat Press, 24 M 7 W - 4 sets.

***THY WILL BE DONE**, Murphy & Lenz - French, 11 M 8 W - 3 sets.

***UPPER ROOM**, The, Benson - Longmans, Green, 8 M 3 W - 1 set, 3 acts.

***BEHOLD THE MAN**, Lord - Queen's Work, 7 M 2 W - 2 sets, 3 acts.

CLAUDIA, PILATE'S DAUGHTER, Rev. F. L. Kenzel - (Out of print but obtainable from CTC library) 12 W, 1 act.

THE CUP OF TREMBLING, Johannes - Bakers Plays, 11 M 2 W 1 boy, 2 acts.

*Work sheet on this play is available.

THE DARK HOURS, One Act Drama In Five Scenes by Don Marquis. This is probably one of the finest dramas of the Passion written in this age. While the text follows closely the King James' version of the Bible, it has been very popular with Catholic groups throughout the country.

SYNOPSIS: This is the familiar story of the last days of JESUS, told in five scenes,

which carry the action from the house of CAIPHAS to Gethsemane, back to the house of CAIPHAS, then to the palace of PILATE, and finally to Golgotha. What distinguishes this script from all other Passion Plays is its rare craftsmanship, which tells the story with a fine regard for the demands of modern theatre, without sacrificing one bit of reverence for the original story.

TYPE: Drama - Catholic - Biblical. **CAST:** 10 characters - 8M, 2F; extras; priests, scribes. **SETS:** 4 - a room in the home of Caiphas; Gethsemane; room in the palace of Pilate; Golgotha. **PLAYING TIME:** 2 hours. **COSTUMES:** Traditional or period. **PRODUCTION:** Can be done very simply. **SOURCE:** Doubleday, Doran and Company, 14 West 49th Street, New York City, New York. \$1 a copy. Consult the publishers for production rights and royalty terms.

THY WILL BE DONE, Three-Act Drama by Robert J. Murphy, C.S.P. and Cecilia Lenz. This is a drama of the Passion, suggested for the use of advanced amateur groups. The play was originally produced by the Newman Club Players of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

SYNOPSIS: GALLUS, a Roman soldier, follows JUDAS to the Garden of Olives where, after Judas' betrayal, he seizes CHRIST and turns Him over to the RABBLE. Assigned to the bitter task of assisting at the Crucifixion of Christ, Gallus though not a Christian, believes that he is putting to death an innocent man. Moreover, CONSTANTIA, wife of Gallus, is a devoted follower of Christ. With a horrible sense of guilt and with the blood of Christ upon his arms, Gallus returns to his wife and crippled child after the hours at Calvary. Trying to excuse himself for the deed he has committed, he points to the fact that if there were a just God, his child CLAUDIUS would not be a cripple. He takes the child in his arms, and as he holds him a miracle is performed before his eyes. His child suddenly straightens his crippled limbs and freeing himself from his father's arms, walks across the room. Gallus realizes that his child has been healed with the blood of Christ, and he is immediately converted to Christianity. ELIAS, son of Caiphas, who witnesses the miracle, is also converted.

TYPE: Drama - Passion - Catholic.
CAST: 19 characters - 11M, 7F; adults and 1 child. SETS: 4 - Garden of olives; room in Gallus' home; outside of Caiphas' estate; Calvary. PLAYING TIME: 1½ hours. COSTUMES: Colorful robes, fully described in the book. PRODUCTION: Ample equipment and musical accompaniment. SOURCE: Samuel French, 25 West 45th Street, New York City. 40 cents a copy. Royalty, \$10 for each performance.

THE BETRAYAL, Three-Act Drama by G. M. Dowsett. This scholarly drama deals with the two trials and the crucifixion of Christ. It is fraught with dark and magnificent tragedy. The crucifixion, and the earthquake that rocks the city and destroys the temple, constitute an awe-inspiring climax. G. K. Chesterton has written an interesting preface for this distinguished script which is one of the best Passion Plays written in recent years.

SYNOPSIS: CHRIST is betrayed by JUDAS in the Garden of Gethsemane and taken into custody. The members of the SANHEDRIN meet to prepare their case against the prisoner. NICODEMUS protests that their proceedings are illegal for it is obvious that Christ is condemned before his trial begins. High Priest High Priest CAIAPHAS, overrules Nicodemus' objections and cleverly persuades him to undertake the defense of Christ. Nicodemus vainly tries to discredit the feeble witnesses, and RUTH OF MAMBRE, the prostitute whose body and soul Christ had saved, exonerates Him and denounces the judges for their treachery. When all testimony fails Christ in answer to Caiaphas admits that He is God, and this in the eyes of the court is blasphemy. He is condemned to death on the cross. Peter denies Christ thrice. Judas flings the thirty pieces of silver at the feet of Caiaphas. Caiaphas appeals to PONTIUS PILATE to confirm the condemnation. Pilate, tortured by his conscience and in fear of the priests, surrenders Christ to the people to be crucified. Pilate's son, GRATUS, is appalled that his father did not protect the Savior whom he, Gratus, loved and followed. An earthquake rocks the city and destroys the temple, and Pilate, aware at last of the injustice he has sanctioned, falls on his knees to ask mercy.

TYPE: Drama - Catholic - Passion - before and after the Crucifixion. CAST: 34 characters - 30M, 3F, 1 boy; adults and child. SETS: 3 - Council room; court of judgment; a garden. PLAYING TIME: 2 hours. COSTUMES: Of the period. PRODUCTION: Requires ample stage equipment. SOURCE: Samuel French, 25 W. 45th St., New York. 75¢ per copy. Royalty, \$25.00.

PATIENCE, PLEASE

In an earlier issue of The Calendar this year, it was mentioned that a membership list was being compiled and would be distributed in January. Your editor has been bogged down with the business of operating your Service Bureau and has been unable thus far to prepare the membership list for the printer. We hope your patience has not run its course and that you will forgive our breach of promise. The list is coming, honestly!

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At Clark College, Dubuque, The Children's Theatre will entertain during February with what promises to be a colorful production of **THE WIZARD OF OZ**. The next production of the College Drama Dept. will be a musical review, **A LIKELY STORY**; by Leo Brady. Productions at Clark are under the direction of Sister Mary Xavier, B.V.M.

February 13 and 14 are the dates for the Play Festival to be held at Rockhurst College, Kansas City, Missouri.

The Jesuit Universities and Colleges of the three Eastern provinces, New York, New England, and Maryland, have formed a Regional Theatre Association for the management of an annual inter-province One-Act Play Festival. Ten colleges and universities are represented: Holy Cross, Boston College, Canisius College, Le Moyne College, Fordham University, St. Peter's College, University of Scranton, St. Joseph's College (Philadelphia), Loyola College (Baltimore), and Georgetown University. Semi-finals will be held in each province, and the highest scoring group in each provincial festival will meet at Fordham on March 7th.

Productions this year at St. John's University, Collegeville, Minn., have included **THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER** and **DREAM-SLAYERS**. Rev. Dominic J. Keller, O.S.B., is director of Drama at St. John's.

George Kelly's **THE SHOW OFF** was the first production of the season at Manhattanville College, Purchase, N. Y. At Christmas they did "The Annunciation", "The Visitation" and "The Nativity" from Gheon's **CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE SQUARE**.

GEORGE WASHINGTON SLEPT HERE was recently done at Immaculate Heart College, Hollywood, under the direction of Joseph Rice. Drama students at IHC are now in rehearsal for their February 27 & 28 production of **ANGEL STREET**. But before the curtain rises on that show, Immaculate Heart College will play host to sixteen high schools and four colleges for their Archdiocesan Play Festival February 14 and 15.

REVERENCE FOR LIFE was the title of the Fordham University Voice program given January 17th. The program, compiled from the

writings of Dr. Albert Schweitzer, was produced by Edward Livesey. On January 24th the University began broadcasting a weekly series of programs dramatizing Jane Austin's **PRIDE AND PREJUDICE**. The play, dramatized as a serial by H. Oldfield Box, will run through February and March over Fordham's WFUV-FM.

Sister M. La Verne, O.S.F., drama director at College of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois, informs us that for their February production they will give Thornton Wilder's **OUR TOWN**.

Community Theatre

We are happy to welcome as a new sustaining member of The Conference, The Catholic Theatre Guild of Mobile, Alabama. Rev. Anthony Zoghby, moderator of the Guild, informed us of his eagerness to affiliate the two-year old organization with the aims and activities of other such groups, through The Conference. In its young life, The Guild has succeeded in doing several plays which have merited the acclaim of Mobile folks. Its latest successes were **SAMSON AND DELILAH** and Tarkington's **SEVENTEEN**. **THE SWEETHEART DANCE** is scheduled for this month's production. Congratulations, Father Zoghby and all the Guild players, and welcome to CTC.

On February 14th and 15th The St. Bernard Players of Madison, Wis. will give **PEG O' MY HEART** while March 21 & 22nd are the dates chosen for their Lenten offering, Robert Hugh Benson's **THE UPPER ROOM**. The latter show will be under the direction of Ed Walz.

The Genesian Players of Cleveland, Ohio completed a short tour of **HER FATAL BEAUTY** during November and December. January and February the group is touring with **SO SHE MADE A NOVENA**. For the Lenten season the Genesian Players will present biblical readings for various parish groups.

The Blackfriars' Guild of Dayton, Ohio informed us by way of their monthly newsletter of their latest production, **HIGH GROUND** by Hastings. In addition to theatre and social news, the publication also carried a very fine new year's message to Guild members from their moderator, Rev. Raymond Schroder.



MINOR MIRACLE, as produced by the Cathedral Players under the direction of Sister Margaret Mary, won First Place for Superior Cathedral High School in the 1951 Wisconsin State One-Act Play Contest. In 1952, in the Pennsylvania

State One-Act Play Competitions, MINOR MIRACLE was accorded the highest possible honors at the University of Pittsburgh. This is typical of the annual recognition attained by this widely acclaimed short drama of men against the sea.

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